

# Obituary

## CYRIL WYNTHROP MACKWORTH-PRAED (1891-1974)

The death of Cyril Mackworth-Praed on 30th June 1974, in his 83rd year, has removed from the Natural History scene not only one of the most eminent observers of wild life of his time, but also one who was equally well versed and erudite as a notable entomologist, as a distinguished ornithologist as well as an expert on wild plants and the larger mammals. Few people in recent times can have had a wider knowledge of some of the specialised branches of these subjects.

It was probably back in his Eton days or when he lived in his youth on the Surrey downs that the incentive came to him to study everything connected with nature around him. His lifelong interest in the lepidoptera doubtless began at this period. Whenever he was able to take time off from his family stockbroking firm in the City, especially during the summer months, he loved nothing better than to observe the butterflies and moths near and at his fine home at Burley in the New Forest where he ran a large moth-trap regularly for over 30 years. He could virtually identify at sight every species that came to it down to the smallest of the micros. He built up over the years a most comprehensive collection of the British lepidoptera, all beautifully set and arranged. The Scottish moors were one of his most rewarding hunting grounds. It was while serving as Colonel in the Scots Guards at Inverlochy Castle, near Fort William during the 1939-45 war, that he found the Chequered Skipper flying in that vicinity, which caused a great stir at the time since no one imagined this agile little butterfly occurred anywhere outside its usual haunts in the Midland counties. As far back as 1919 he discovered, also in the western Highlands, the little moth *Symaethis diana* Hübn., of which very few examples have been found since. Cyril Praed also cast his net wide, collecting in Europe, in the Alps, the Pyrenees and Sardinia, also in Cyprus. Africa was the scene of several visits, the earliest being in 1914, a most adventurous occasion when he and friends were in pursuit of big game in what is now Tanzania. They found themselves under fire from the German settlers. This was their first realisation that war had broken out in Europe. He tells how they made a suitable reply with their arms before returning to British territory and then back to England to serve, as he did, with the Scots Guards for the duration of that war.

Cyril Praed was possibly even better known as an ornithologist. He was a member of the British Ornithologists' Union for over 50 years and became its Secretary and Treasurer. The birds of Africa have always been of supreme interest to him. Between 1952 and 1973 were published, at first with the collaboration of the late Capt. C. H. Grant, the *African Handbook of Birds* in six large volumes, all beautifully illustrated and covering all the species known south of the Sahara. For his services in this field he was awarded the O.B.E. Wild flowers

were another of his hobbies. He had a fine collection of pressed specimens from both the British Isles and Europe.

His prowess with rifle, rod and gun was equally renowned and many stories are told of his remarkable feats with these weapons, whether on the moors or at Bisley where he competed for many years in the Queen's Prize. In the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924, the rifle team he led won a gold medal. Many a large fish too did he land from the waters of the Hampshire Avon and other famous rivers. In fact, Cyril Praed was one of those people who excelled in everything he carried out. He was quite indefatigable, even pursuing butterflies in Kenya when he was nearly 80 but the onset of a serious physical disability began to curtail his energy and activities. Even when severely crippled he would go meticulously through the contents of his moth-trap at his Hampshire home.

He was indeed a most inspiring personality and a most delightful companion in the field, always full of enthusiasm and cheerfulness. His loss will be very widely felt not only in the Natural History world, but among a very large circle of friends who admired his fine qualities. All sympathy is extended to his widow and to his three sons and two daughters.

C.G.M. de W.

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PTYCHOLOMOIDES AERIFERANUS H.-S. AND PAMMENE AURANTIANA STAUD. IN MONMOUTHSHIRE. — On the evening of 10th July 1973, together with a friend Mr. R. C. Shillinglaw, I visited my favourite "mothing" site in Tintern Forest and set up my m.v. light on a wooded hillside above the River Wye. After a hot humid day the night was warm and overcast and, with many moths flying, it proved a memorable occasion.

Sixty-seven species of Macrolepidoptera came to the light, including *Pseudoips prasinana* L., *Autographa bractea* D. & S., *Miltochrista miniata* Forst., *Perizoma blandiata* D. & S., and *Semiothisa notata* L., all five of which are of infrequent occurrence in Monmouthshire.

There were also many species of Microlepidoptera, the most notable being the Tortricid *Ptycholomoides aeriferanus* H.-S. This appeared plentifully on the sheet and I secured several specimens of both sexes. These were not recognised at the time but were later identified by Dr. J. D. Bradley.

The first British record of this moth was from Kent in 1952 and subsequent records given by J. D. Bradley, W. G. Tremewan, and Arthur Smith (British Tortricoid Moths) are limited to eastern and southern England. Its range would therefore appear to have now extended right across England into Wales.

A second Tortricid which also appears to have rapidly extended its range westwards during the last two decades and has now turned up in Monmouthshire is *Pammene aurantiana* Staud. A single example of this moth, in fresh condition,